

Jarujin Nabhitabhata (1950-2008)

Yodchaiy CHUAYNKERN* ** & Chantip INTHARA* ***

* Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Département de Systématique et Évolution, Reptiles et Amphibiens, CP 30, 25 rue Cuvier, 75005 Paris, France, <ychuaynkern@yahoo.com>

** Thailand Natural History Museum, National Science Museum, Technopolis, Khlong 5, Khlong Luang, Pathum Thani 12120, Thailand

*** Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Khon Kaen University, Muang, Khon Kaen 40002, Thailand

Jarujin Nabhitabhata (fig. 1), a Thai naturalist, died unexpectedly on 12 September 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand, at the age of 58. For all his friends and colleagues he was "Jarujin", a great lover of natural history and fine expert of wildlife. He was born in Bangkok on 22 January 1950. He graduated from Kasetsart University (Bangkok) with bachelor and master degrees in Science (Agriculture) in 1971 and 1979, respectively. The subject of his thesis was the family Tabanidae (Insecta, Diptera).

While studying his Master degree, Jarujin made an important experience working with a great Thai naturalist, Dr Boonsong Lekagul (1907-1992). Jarujin also worked at the Association for the Conservation of Wildlife to collect butterflies in many parts of the country. In 1966, he started his work at the Centre for the Thai National Reference Collection of the Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research (TISTR). Staying over 31 years in this institute, he spent most of his time collecting animal specimens throughout the country. When the Thailand Natural History Museum (THNHM) was successfully established in 1977, Jarujin moved to work there and many scientific specimens from the TISTR were transferred to its collection. He worked at this place until his last day, ending his career as the Director of the Thailand Natural History Museum.

The establishment of the natural history museum in Thailand was instigated by Jarujin's master Boonsong. This effort began by collaboration with both foreigners and Thais for exploring the fauna and collecting scientific specimens (e.g., amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals) throughout the country. The results of these faunal biodiversity explorations were presented in various forms, especially books *Field guide to the butterflies of Thailand* (LEKAGUL et al., 1977), *Mammals of Thailand* (LEKAGUL & McNEELY, 1998), *A field guide to the birds of Thailand* (LEKAGUL & ROUND, 1991). These books were related in various ways with Jarujin's activity, as co-author, collector of specimens, or author of suggested Thai names for many species. Unfortunately, the establishment of the natural history museum did not happen in the life time of Boonsong but it was accomplished during Jarujin's life.



Fig 1 Jarujin Nabhitabhata (1950-2008) in 2007. Photograph courtesy of Smith Satabutr

Until the last day of his life, Jarujin kindly collaborated with both foreign and domestic scientists in elucidating the faunal diversity of Thailand. Regular faunal summaries and updates in the form of books (e.g. NABHITABHATA, 1988; COX et al., 1998; NABHITABHATA & SUWANNAPHAK, 2001; SUWANNAPHAK & NABHITABHATA, 2008) and checklists (e.g. NABHITABHATA et al., 2004; NABHITABHATA & CHAN-ARD, 2005) were published as the sum of observations accumulated over the years. Along with his entomologist colleagues, he described the beetle *Aesalus dharma* (Coleoptera, Lucanidae) (ARAYA et al., 1994). In the field of batrachology, four new species of anurans were described from Thailand: *Ansonia uthanon* (MATSUI et al., 1998), *Leptobrachium smithi* (MATSUI et al., 1999), *Ansonia kraensis* (MATSUI et al., 2005) and *Amolops panhai* (MATSUI & NABHITABHATA, 2006). As for reptiles, seven new species of lizards were described: *Gekko taylori* (OTA & NABHITABHATA, 1991), *Dibamus sonisaki* (HONDA et al., 1997), *Ptyctolaemus phuwuanensis* (MANTHEY & NABHITABHATA, 1991), *Tropidophorus latiscutatus* (HIKIDA et al., 2002), *Tropidophorus matsui* (HIKIDA et al., 2002), *Tropidophorus murphyi* (HIKIDA et al., 2002) and *Tropidophorus hangnam* (CHUAYNKERN et al., 2005). In recognition for his efforts, at least six new species of animals were named after him for his contribution to the study of natural history in Thailand: *Liphistius jarujini* (Arachnida, Liphistidae) (ONO, 1988), *Potamon jarujini* (Decapoda, Potamidae) (NG & NAIYANI IRI, 1993), *Cyrtodaetylus jarujini* (Squamata, Gekkonidae) (ULMER, 1993), *Conio-compso nabhitabhata* (Neuroptera, Coniopterygidae) (SZIRÁKI, 2002), *Platyroptilon jarujini* (Diptera, Keratoplatidae) (PAPP et al., 2006), *Rhacophorus jarujini* (Amphibia, Rhacophori-

dae) (MATSUI & PANHA, 2006) and *Trichogalumna nabhitabhatai* (Acari, Galumnidae) (MAHUNKA, 2008).

Jarujin also worked as invited professor for several universities: Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok), Kasetsart University (Bangkok), Mahidol University (Bangkok), Mahasarakham University (Bangkok) Along with various professors of these universities, he laid the basic framework for biological studies for students. The results of this effort is reflected in the numerous thesis defended by his students (e.g., CHAN-ARD, 1987; JEERASI KSALIEW, 1991; PHLENGCHILN, 1994; INTHARA, 2000; CHUAYNKERN, 2001; NOIKOTR, 2001; SUKPRAKARN, 2003; TAKSINTUM, 2003, MELWATTANA, 2005) and the research articles published in common (e.g., SUKPRAKARN & NABHITABHATA, 2003, KONGCHAROEN & NABHITABHATA, 2007; INTHARA et al., 2005) His students are now working in several government agencies, NGOs or companies and now strongly participate in efforts concerning conservation policy and biological study in Thailand. To acknowledge his effort as a teacher, Jarujin was offered in 2004 the honorary doctorate degree in Biology from Mahasarakham University. This was the final recognition of the scientific importance of a life dedicated to exploration of wildlife in abundant collaboration.

Beside from his friends, colleagues or students, Jarujin Nabhitabhata should receive broad respect for his devotion to his career. Everyone's life has a last day, and Jarujin has attained it before us. For all of us his early and unexpected disappearance happened at the inappropriate moment. His name and his contributions on natural history will be reminded forever.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Worrawari Seewong (THNHM) for providing and confirming some information. Annemarie Ohler and Alan Dubois are thanked for their kindness of correcting and editing our draft. We also thank Wachara Sangiansombat (THNHM) for providing Jarujin's photograph.

LITERATURE CITED

- ARAYA, K., MATSUI, M., NABHITABHATA, J. & PANHA, S., 1994. A new Bristly *Aesalus* (Coleoptera, Lucanidae) from Peninsular Thailand. *Giorn. ital. Entom.*, 7: 73-77.
- CHAN-ARD, T. 1987. *Species diversity of amphibians in Huay Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Uthai Thani and Tak Provincs*. MS Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University [In Thai with English abstract].
- CHUAYNKERN, Y. 2001. *Species diversity of amphibians and reptiles at Pang Sida National Park, Sakaeo Province*. MS Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University [In Thai with English abstract].
- CHUAYNKERN, Y., NABHITABHATA, J., INTHARA, C., KAMSOOK, M. & SOMSEI, K., 2005. A new species of the Water skink *Leopoldophorus* (Reptilia: Squamata: Scincidae) from Northeast Thailand. *Thailand nat. Hist. Mus. J.*, 1: 165-175.
- COX, M. J., VAN DUK, P. P., NABHITABHATA, J. & THIRAKHUPPI, K., 1998. *A photographic guide to snakes and other reptiles of Thailand and Southeast Asia*. Bangkok, Asia Books, 1-144.
- HIEUDA, T., ORIGON, N. L., NABHITABHATA, J. & OIA, H., 2007. Three new depressed bodied water skinks of the genus *Leopoldophorus* (Lacertidae: Scincidae) from Thailand and Vietnam. *Curr. Herp.*, 21: 9-23.

- HONDA, M., NABHITABHATA, J., OTA, H. & HIKIDA, T. 1997. – A new species of *Dibamus* (Squamata: Dibamidae) from Thailand. *Raffles Bull. Zool.*, **45**: 276-279.
- INTHARA, C., 2000. – Study on mouthparts structures in relation to feeding behavior of some tadpole species. Ms Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University. [In Thai with English abstract].
- INTHARA, C., LAOHACHINDA, V., NABHITABHATA, J., CHUAYNKERN, Y. & KUMTONG, P., 2004. – Mouth part structures and distribution of some tadpoles from Thailand. *Thailand nat. Hist. Mus. J.*, **1**: 55-78.
- JUERASUKSALIEW, S., 1991. – Species diversity of amphibians and reptiles in different utilization area in Rayong Province. Ms Thesis, Kasetsart University, Bangkok. [In Thai with English abstract].
- KONGCHAROEN, W. & NABHITABHATA, J., 2007. – Species diversity and altitudinal distribution of the amphibians along Lam Ta Klong stream area in Khao Yai National Park. *J. Wildl. Thailand*. **14**: 113-128.
- LEKAGUL, B., ASKINS, K., NABHITABHATA, J. & SAMRUADKIT, A., 1977. – Field guide to the butterflies of Thailand. Bangkok, Association for the Conservation of Wildlife: 1-260.
- LEKAGUL, B., & MCNEELY, J. A., 1988. – The mammals of Thailand. Bangkok, Saha Karn Bhaet Co.: 1-758.
- LEKAGUL, B., & ROUND, P. D., 1991. – A guide to the birds of Thailand. Bangkok, Saha Karn Bhaet Co.: 1-457.
- MAHUNKA, S., 2008. – A new genus and some other data of oribatids from Thailand (Acari: Oribatida). *Acta zoologica Academiae Scientiarum hungaricae*, **54**: 125-150.
- MANTHEY, U., & NABHITABHATA, J., 1991. – Eine neue Agame, *Ptyctolaemus phuvvaensis* sp.n. (Sauria: Agamidae), aus Nordost-Thailand. *Sauria*, **13**: 3-6.
- MATSUL, M., KHONSUE, W. & NABHITABHATA, J., 2005. – A new *Ansonia* from Isthmus of Kra, Thailand (Amphibia, Anura, Bufonidae). *Zool. Sci.*, **22**: 809-814.
- MATSUL, M. & NABHITABHATA, J., 2006. – A new species of *Amolops* from Thailand (Amphibia, Anura, Ranidae). *Zool. Sci.*, **23**: 727-732.
- MATSUL, M., NABHITABHATA, J. & PANHA, S., 1998. – A new *Ansonia* from northern Thailand (Anura: Bufonidae). *Herpetologica*, **54**: 448-454.
- 1999. – On *Leptobrachium* from Thailand with a description of a new species (Anura: Pelobatidae). *Jap. J. Herp.*, **18**: 19-29.
- MATSUL, M. & PANHA, S., 2006. – A new species of *Rhacophorus* from eastern Thailand (Anura: Rhacophoridae). *Zool. Sci.*, **23**: 477-481.
- MEEWATTANA, P., 2005. – Morphological characters for identification of anuran tadpoles in Khao Luang National Park, Khlong Nakha and Hala-Bala Wildlife Sanctuary. PhD Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University.
- NABHITABHATA, J., 1988. – Amphibians. Bangkok, Business Organization of the Teachers' Council of Thailand: 1-56. [In Thai].
- NABHITABHATA, J. & CHAN-ARD, T., 2005. – Thai red data: mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Bangkok, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning: 1-234.
- NABHITABHATA, J., CHAN-ARD, T. & CHUAYNKERN, Y., 2004. – Checklist of amphibians and reptiles in Thailand. Bangkok, Office of Environmental Policy and Planning, "2000": 1-152.
- NABHITABHATA, J. & SUWANNAPHAK, K., 2001. – Field guide of the butterflies in Thailand. Bangkok, Wana Press: 1-320. [In Thai].
- NG, P. K. L. & NAIYANETRE, P., 1993. – New and recently described freshwater crabs (Crustacea: Decapoda: Brachyura: Potamidae, Gecarcinucidae and Parathelphusidae) from Thailand. *Zoologische Verhandlungen*, **284**: 1-117.
- NOIKOTR, K., 2001. – Diversity of mature anurans and their tadpole in Khao Kitchakut National Park area, Chanthaburi Province. Ms Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University. [In Thai with English abstract].
- PAPP, L., MERZ, B. & FÖLDVÁRI, M., 2006. – Diptera of Thailand: a summary of the families and genera with references to the species representations. *Acta zoologica Academiae Scientiarum hungaricae*, **52**: 97-269.
- PHILUNGCHEN, V., 1994. – A species survey of amphibians in Khao Khetue-Khao Chomphu, Chon Buri Province. Ms Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University. [In Thai with English abstract].
- ONO, H., 1998. – Liphistiid spiders (Araneae, Mesothelae) of northwest Thailand. *Bull. natn. Sci. Sci. Mus.*, Tokyo, **14**: 35-41.

- OTA, H. & NABHITABHATA, J., 1991. – A new species of *Gekko* (Gekkonidae: Squamata) from Thailand. *Copeia*, **1991**: 503-509.
- SUKPRAKARN, N., 2003. – *Species diversity and habitats of amphibians and reptiles at Namtok Phliu National Park, Chanthaburi Province*. Ms Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University. [In Thai with English abstract].
- SUKPRAKARN, N. & NABHITABHATA, J., 2003. – Species diversity and habitats of amphibians and reptiles at Namtok Phliu National Park, Chanthaburi Province. In: V. BAIMAI & R. TANTALAKHA (ed.), *BRT Research Report 2003*, Bangkok, Chuan Printing Press Ltd.: 235-244. [In Thai with English abstract].
- SUWANNAPHAK, K. & NABHITABHATA, J., 2008. – *Field guide of insects*. Bangkok, Sarakadee Press: 1-224. [In Thai].
- SZIRÁKI, G., 2002. – Coniopterygidae (Neuroptera) from Thailand. *Folia ent. hungarica*, **63**: 53-64.
- TAKSINTUM, W., 2003. – *Diversity of mature frogs and their tadpole in Khlong Sang Wildlife Sanctuary*. Ms Thesis, Bangkok, Kasetsart University. [In Thai with English abstract].
- ULBER, T., 1993. – Bemerkungen über cyrtodactyline Geckos aus Thailand nebst Beschreibungen von zwei neuen Arten (Reptilia: Gekkonidae). *Mitt. zool. Mus. Berlin*, **69**: 187-200.

